Application of Nouri E. Hakim
Serial No.: 10/001,257 filed 11/27/2001
Response of October 28, 2003 to Office Action of May 28, 2003

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-70 (cancelled)

71. (New) A method, comprising:

(a) providing a no-spill drinking apparatus, said apparatus being provided for a user to drink liquid out of, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the user;

(b) said no-spill drinking apparatus comprising a cap, said cap further comprising a spout, said cap being provided for the user to drink liquid from said spout, and to prevent spilling of liquid out of said spout when the user is not drinking from said spout;

(c) said cap comprising a valve, said valve comprising a flexible material, said flexible material comprising an opening therein;

(d) said apparatus comprising a blocking element below said flexible material;

(e) wherein said opening of said flexible material rests against said blocking element when the user is not drinking from said spout;

(f) and wherein said flexible material rises off of said blocking element, unblocking said opening, when the user sucks through said spout to drink from said spout;

(g) and wherein said apparatus is designed to allow air into said apparatus, said cap comprising an air vent, such that when the user sucks through said spout, liquid passes through said opening and out of said spout, and air passes through said vent and into said apparatus.

72. (New) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said opening is a hole.

73. (New) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said opening is a slit.

74. (New) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said apparatus further comprises a valve holder, said valve holder being separable from said cap and being dimensioned to fit snugly into said cap.

75. (New) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said flexible material of said valve comprises a portion of material having a first thickness, and wherein the area of said flexible material which seals against said blocking element is provided with a thickness of material which is greater said first thickness.

76. (New) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said spout of said cap is soft, and wherein said cap further comprises a hard section for attachment to a cup.

77. (New) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said apparatus further comprises:
(a) a valve holder, said valve holder being separable from said cap and being dimensioned to fit snugly into said cap;
(b) wherein said flexible material of said valve comprises a portion of material having a first thickness, and wherein the area of said flexible material which seals against said blocking element is provided with a thickness of material which is greater said first thickness;
(c) and wherein said apparatus comprises a cup, and said cup is hard.

78. (New) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said apparatus is provided for drinking by a child, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the child.

79. (New) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said apparatus comprises a cup.

80. (New) A method as claimed in claim 77, wherein said apparatus is provided for drinking by a child, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the child.

81. (New) A method as claimed in claim 77, wherein said spout of said cap is soft, and wherein said cap further comprises a hard section for attachment to a cup.

82. (New) A method, comprising:

(a) providing a no-spill drinking apparatus, said apparatus being provided for a user to drink liquid out of, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the user;

(b) said no-spill drinking apparatus comprising a cap, said cap comprising a spout, said cap being provided for the user to drink liquid from said spout, and to prevent spilling of liquid out of said spout when the user is not drinking from said spout;

(c) said cap comprising a valve, said valve comprising a flexible material, said flexible material comprising an opening therein;

(d) said apparatus comprising a blocking element below said flexible material;

(e) wherein said opening of said flexible material rests against said blocking element when the user is not drinking from said spout;

(f) and wherein said flexible material rises off of said blocking element, unblocking said opening, when the user sucks through said spout to drink from said spout;

(g) wherein said flexible material comprises the shape of a bowl, said bowl having a top and a bottom, said opening being located in said bottom, said bowl being initially upright when said opening rests against said blocking element;

(h) and wherein said flexible material begins to invert when the user sucks through said spout, such that said bottom of said bowl moves toward said top of said bowl, with said opening in said bottom moving toward said top of said bowl, to allow liquid to exit through said opening;

(i) and wherein said cap further comprises an air vent, such that when the user sucks through said spout, liquid passes through said opening and out of said spout, and air passes through said air vent and into said apparatus.

83. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said opening is a hole.

84. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said opening is a slit.

85. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus further comprising a valve holder, said valve holder being separable from said cap and being dimensioned to fit snugly into said cap.

86. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said flexible material of said valve comprises a portion of material having a first thickness, and wherein the area of said flexible material which seals against said blocking element is provided with a thickness of material which is greater said first thickness.

87. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said spout of said cap is soft, and wherein said cap further comprises a hard section for attachment to a cup.

88. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

(a) a valve holder, said valve holder being separable from said cap and being dimensioned to fit snugly into said cap;

(b) wherein said flexible material of said valve comprises a portion of material having a first thickness, and wherein the area of said flexible material which seals against said blocking element is provided with a thickness of material which is greater said first thickness;

(c) and wherein said apparatus comprises a cup, and said cup is hard.

89. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus is provided for drinking by a child, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the child.

90. (New) A method as claimed in claim 88, wherein said apparatus is provided for drinking by a child, and to prevent accidental spilling of liquid by the child.

91. (New) A method as claimed in claim 88, wherein said spout of said cap is soft, and wherein said cap further comprises a hard section for attachment to a cup.

92. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus comprises a cup.

93. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus further comprises:

(a) a valve holder, said valve holder being separable from said cap and being dimensioned to fit snugly into said cap;

(b) wherein said flexible material of said valve comprises a portion of material having a first thickness, and wherein the area of said flexible material which seals against said blocking element is provided with a thickness of material which is greater said first thickness;

(c) and wherein said spout of said cap is soft, and said cap further comprises a hard section for attachment to a cup.

94. (New) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said air vent comprises a hole which is open on the bottom, and which, on the opposing side merges into a surface of said cap.

95. (New) A method as claimed in claim 77, wherein said air vent comprises a hole which is open on the bottom, and which, on the opposing side merges into a surface of said cap.

96. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said air vent comprises a hole which is open on the bottom, and which, on the opposing side merges into a surface of said cap.

97. (New) A method as claimed in claim 87, wherein said air vent comprises a hole which is open on the bottom, and which, on the opposing side merges into a surface of said cap.

98. (New) A method as claimed in claim 88, wherein said air vent comprises a hole which is open on the bottom, and which, on the opposing side merges into a surface of said cap.

99. (New) A method as claimed in claim 91, wherein said air vent comprises a hole which is open on the bottom, and which, on the opposing side merges into a surface of said cap.

100. (New) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

101. (New) A method as claimed in claim 77, wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

102. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

103. (New) A method as claimed in claim 87, wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

104. (New) A method as claimed in claim 88, wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

105. (New) A method as claimed in claim 91 wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

106. (New) A method as claimed in claim 94, wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

107. (New) A method as claimed in claim 95, wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

108. (New) A method as claimed in claim 96, wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

109. (New) A method as claimed in claim 97 wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

110. (New) A method as claimed in claim 98 wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

111. (New) A method as claimed in claim 99 wherein said apparatus comprises a cross-bar in contact with said flexible material.

112. (New) A method as claimed in claim 71, wherein said apparatus comprises a T-shaped opening.

113. (New) A method as claimed in claim 82, wherein said apparatus further comprises a T-

shaped opening.

114. (New) A method as claimed in claim 94, wherein said apparatus further comprises a T-shaped opening.

115. (New) A method as claimed in claim 96, wherein said apparatus further comprises a T-shaped opening.

116. (New) A method as claimed in claim 100, wherein said apparatus further comprises a T-shaped opening.

117. (New) A method as claimed in claim 102, wherein said apparatus further comprises a T-shaped opening.

118. (New) A method as claimed in claim 111, wherein said apparatus further comprises a T-shaped opening.